IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT 18 SOUTH
LAND USE STRATEGY

Alberta
MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS

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Acknowledgement

This Land Use Strategy is a revised edition of the original Improvement District 18 Strategy which was adopted in June, 1980. The following Advisory Councillors and Municipal Planning Commission Members participated in this revision.

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IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT 18 LAND USE STRATEGY

Introduction

The first Improvement District 18 Land Use Strategy was prepared at the request of the I.D. 18 South Municipal Planning Commissions and the Improvement District Administration in 1979. It's purpose was to provide a policy framework for the Land Use Order which was required by The Planning Act, 1977.

In 1982, the Advisory Councils in I.D. 18 South initiated a review of the Land Use Strategy, to ensure that the policies and directions were still applicable, and the document was functioning effectively. This document reflects the changes which resulted from that review.

Purpose

The primary purpose of this document is to provide a broad policy framework for land use and development in Improvement District 18 South (see map 1). More specifically it is intended to:

(i) provide a policy basis for the I.D. 18 Land Use Order;
(ii) provide guidance to municipal authorities in dealing with proposals for subdivision and development of land;
(iii) serve as a reference guide for other government departments and agencies whose actions may influence land use and development in I.D. 18; and
(iv) inform the public of the criteria which may be required for subdivision and development of land in I.D. 18.

Philosophy

The Improvement District 18 Land Use Strategy represents a step towards establishing uniform guidelines for municipal land use decision making in Improvement District 18 South. The strategy identifies local land use issues, and then outlines an approach to deal with them through general directions and goals, and more specific policies.

This Strategy has been kept general, due to a lack of detailed land use data for significant portions of the area. Despite this lack of information however, there is an urgent need for land use guidelines which provide consistency in the decision-making process, yet flexible enough to accommodate variances in circumstance and location. The Strategy therefore, provides an approach to dealing with the more critical land use issues facing municipal authorities and should be viewed as an interim measure until more comprehensive planning can be carried out.

The policies contained in this document reflect the need to keep a range of land use options open to future generations. The underlying premise is that in the absence of detailed information, the guidelines should tend to be more general. It is anticipated that this document and the subsequent Land Use Order will be revised and amended over time as development progresses. The Strategy focuses on rural areas and the rural/urban fringe; it does not attempt to deal with lands within urban municipalities, mineral resources, Indian Reserves, or the management of Crown lands.

Basis of Authority

This Land Use Strategy has not been approved by Ministerial Order, and does not have any legislative basis. It has been prepared by the Advisory Councils of Improvement District 18 South as their guidelines for land use and development in the I.D. It is the intention of the Advisory Councils to use the Strategy as a policy document to supplement the I.D. 18 Land Use Order, which was statutory authority under the Planning Act RSA 1980.

Two Government of Alberta departments have authority over certain aspects of land use and development in I.D. 18. Alberta Energy and Natural Resources, as manager of Crown lands, receives, reviews, and approves applications for the disposition of a wide variety of land uses. It has the authority to subdivide, lease, or dispose of Crown land under its jurisdiction.

Alberta Municipal Affairs provides local government services to the area through the Improvement District Operation Division. Alberta Municipal Affairs receives, reviews, and has the authority to approve subdivision applications on patented land in the I.D.

The Improvement District through the issuance of development permits, has control over "development" as defined in the Planning Act, RSA 1980, on all patented and Crown lands in I.D. 18. This does not include developments undertaken by the crown, or development on lands under federal jurisdiction, where development permits are not required.

It is intended that the Strategy and Land Use Order will provide direction for subdivision of patented lands and approval of development permits. It is also anticipated that the Strategy and Order will provide a reference for Alberta Energy and Natural Resources in the management of Crown lands. Much of the Crown land in the I.D. which Energy and Natural Resources manages comes under the "Green Area" regulations which, while subject to periodic change or exception, do not generally permit agriculture (aside from grazing) or residential use. The I.D. 18 Land Use Strategy does not propose to supercede the established Green Area regulations.

Relationship to Other Planning Documents

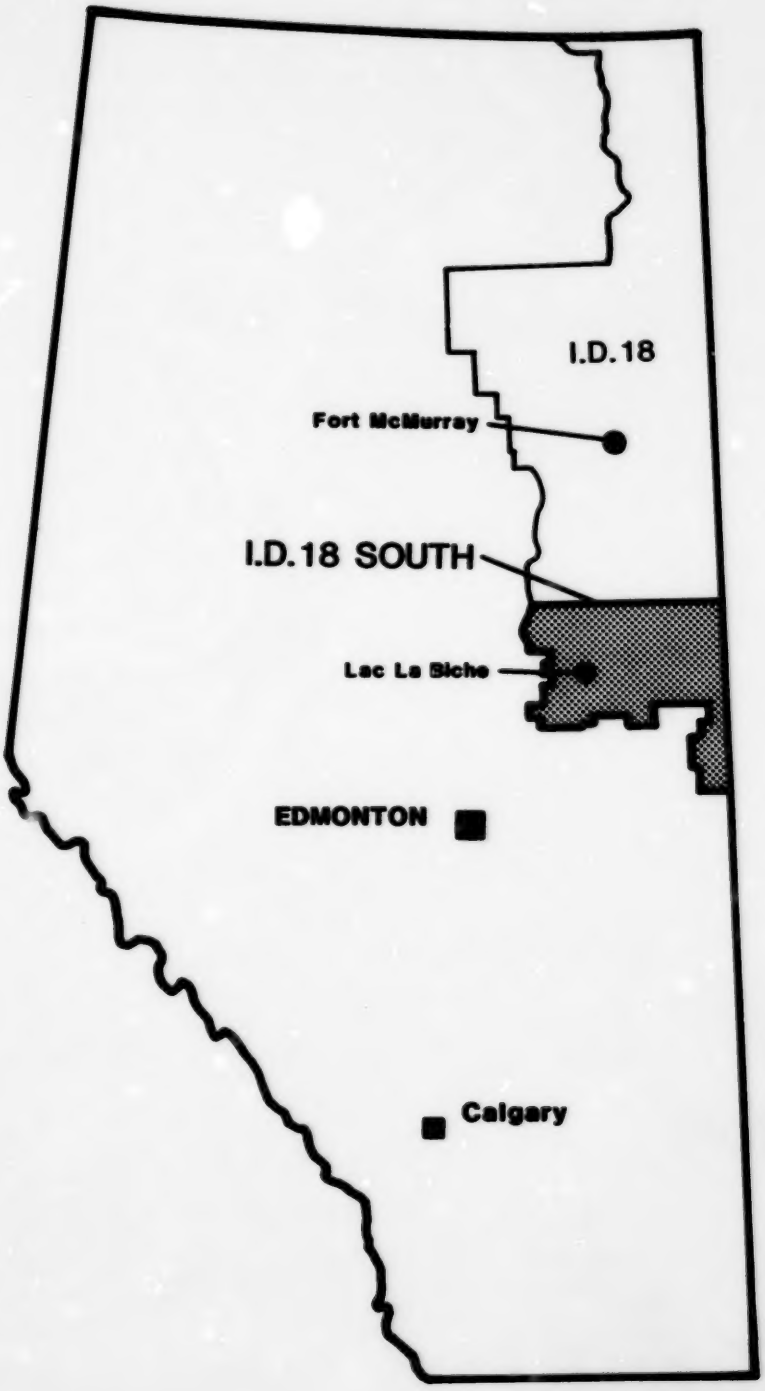
One of the main purposes of the Land Use Strategy is to provide a policy basis for the implementation of the Land Use Order, which is the main development control document in the Improvement District.

There are also other plans in I.D. 18 South entitled area structure plans. These plans are more detailed planning documents, based on more specific information than the Land Use Strategy. Where area structure plans are in place, all developments approved by the I.D. shall be in accordance with them.

Interpretation

Throughout the policies contained in the Strategy, operative words such as "shall", "should", and "may" are utilized. Definitions for the three are as follows:

- **shall** means the action is obligatory.
- **should** means that in order to achieve the Strategy goals it is strongly advised that the action be taken, and that exceptions may only be made under extenuating circumstances.
- **may** means that a choice is available, with no particular direction or guidance intended.



MAP 1 - LOCATION

Policies

1. AGRICULTURE

Agriculture is considered to be a valuable economic activity in Improvement District 18 South, being the major use of land and a significant source of employment. However, land speculation and the loss of good agricultural land to non farm uses has resulted in higher agricultural land prices and a decreasing agricultural land base. Oil and gas exploration and development have also had an impact on farming in the Improvement District.

Directions and Goals

In order to maintain agriculture as a viable economic activity, the Improvement District shall strive to conserve lands with higher capability for producing feed grain, cereal grain, forage or speciality crops and to direct land uses which are not dependent upon productive soil to other areas. Because I.D. 18 does not have extensive tracts of highly productive soil compared with other regions of Alberta, it is desirable to conserve for agricultural purposes what little productive land is available. In this way the agricultural sector of the regional economy will be maintained, lands essential to cow-calf operations can be kept in agriculture, and soils capable of producing foodstuffs locally will be preserved for that purpose. More specifically, the goals of the I.D. are:

1. TO CONSERVE AGRICULTURE AND FURTHER ITS DEVELOPMENT.
2. TO DIVERSIFY AND INTENSIFY AGRICULTURE.

Development Policies

1.1 Lands with higher capability for production of agricultural crops should be conserved for agricultural purposes; uses not dependent upon higher capability soils should be directed to other areas.

1.2 The I.D. considers higher capability agricultural land to be those lands with C.L.I. agricultural capability of Class 4 or better, or a farmland assessment rating of 20% or higher. Lower capability agricultural lands include those with C.L.I. agricultural capability of Class 5 or lower, and a farmland assessment rating of less than 20%.

1.3 The primary use of higher capability agricultural land is for extensive or intensive agricultural uses involving the production of feed grains, cereal grains, forage crops, specialty crops, livestock and other animals on a commercial basis, and associated farmsteads. Other compatible uses shall be considered by the I.D. These are identified in the I.D. 18 Land Use Order.

1.4 The I.D. should request that Crown lands with higher agricultural capability be considered for agricultural uses.

1.5 The I.D. should request that Crown lands with only marginal capability for grazing or crop production be utilized for uses other than grazing or agriculture, e.g., recreation, forestry, resource extraction, etc.

1.6 The I.D. shall maintain the quarter section or river lot as the minimum parcel size for extensive agriculture. This may be altered when:
- (a) parcels are fragmented (separated) by a natural or man made barrier such as ravines, watercourses, roads, etc.;
- (b) parcels have been subdivided from the quarter section or river lot for a use permitted by the I.D. 18 Land Use Order.

1.7 Where agricultural land is required for road, rail line, communication facilities, pipelines or transmission lines, the I.D. should only endorse proposals which minimize the fragmentation of agricultural land.

1.8 Subdivision of land for intensive agricultural purposes may be permitted, but the application shall be accompanied by written comments from the District Agriculturist commenting on the feasibility of the proposed use and suitability of the site.

1.9 Development permit applications for new livestock confinement facilities or expansion of existing operations shall be accompanied by written comments on facility design, siting and management from the Alberta Agriculture Waste Management Specialist or District Agriculturist. The Development Officer shall consider such comments when reviewing these applications.

1.10 Operators of livestock confinement facilities shall be encouraged to obtain a Certificate of Compliance under the Alberta Agriculture and Alberta Environment **Code of Practice.**

1.11 The Alberta Agriculture Minimum Distance Separation (MDS) formula should be applied when reviewing subdivision or development applications for land uses proposed to be located near existing livestock confinement facilities.

2. COUNTRY RESIDENTIAL

Country residential living is a lifestyle alternative which the I.D. wishes to accommodate, but in a fashion which minimizes negative impacts. Specific concerns of the I.D. which result from country residential development include: municipal servicing costs; ground water and surface water contamination; and land use conflicts with incompatible land uses, including agriculture, industry, wildlife habitat, public access to recreational shorelands, urban expansion, energy and utility corridors, and commercial fishing.

Directions and Goals

The Improvement District shall accommodate country residential development through farmstead separations, single lot and multi-lot country residential developments on lower capability agricultural land. The primary use of country residential lots will be residential (one single family residence per lot), although minor agricultural pursuits may be permitted. It is not the intention that country residential lots be utilized for commercial agricultural purposes, as locations for businesses, or as storage facilities for commercial vehicles, construction equipment or heavy equipment. The specific goals of the I.D. are:

1. TO PROVIDE FOR COUNTRY RESIDENTIAL OPPORTUNITIES.
2. TO LOCATE COUNTRY RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT ON LOWER CAPABILITY AGRICULTURAL LAND.
3. TO AVOID EXCESSIVE CONCENTRATION OF COUNTRY RESIDENCES ON SHORELINES.

Development Policies

General

2.1 Country residential opportunities should be available with a range of lot sizes, densities and locations.

2.2 The amount of country residential subdivision and development permitted should be based not only on demand, but also on the amount and type of housing which the I.D. is willing and able to support. Subdivisions and developments should contribute taxes equal or greater than their municipal servicing costs.

2.3 Setbacks shall be maintained between country residential subdivisions and adjacent incompatible uses. In addition to the Planning Act and Subdivision Regulation, country residential development shall not be permitted:
- (a) within an area likely to be subjected to hazards or high levels of noise, dust or odours from industrial, transportation or intensive agricultural operations;
- (b) in close proximity to a resource extraction operation;
- (c) within 1.6 km (1 mile) from an industry or other activity potentially detrimental to a residential development;
- (d) within the 1 in 100 year flood plain;
- (e) within an Airport Protection Vicinity Area;
- (f) within river shoreland areas (excepting farmstead separations);
- (g) on parcels which do not have satisfactory access.

2.4 Country residential development should not be permitted where it would:
- (a) conflict significantly with existing land use;
- (b) unduly increase municipal servicing costs;
- (c) preclude future land uses which could be of greater public benefit;
- (d) significantly alter the rural characters of the area; or
- (e) contribute to existing surface or groundwater contamination in a local area.

2.5 The development of all approved lots in existing country residential subdivisions should be encouraged. Country residential subdivisions should not be permitted where the I.D. has determined there to be an oversupply of lots in a local area.

2.6 The I.D. shall not issue a development permit for country residential purposes prior to receiving written evidence from the Plumbing Inspection Branch, Alberta Labour; indicating that the type of proposed sewage disposal system has been approved.

2.7 The I.D. should support investigations into alternate sewage disposal methods for country residential subdivisions.

2.8 All applications for resort residential or cottage subdivisions shall be treated as country residential subdivisions.

2.9 All livestock and pets shall be confined to the owners' property in country residential subdivision; livestock shall not be permitted in multi-lot country residential subdivisions.

Single Lot Country Residences

2.10 One farmstead may be subdivided from an unsubdivided quarter section or river lot.

2.11 One single lot country residence may be subdivided from an unsubdivided quarter section or river lot, provided that the site is lower capability agricultural land, and complies with all provisions of this Land Use Strategy and the I.D. 18 Land Use Order.

Multi-Lot Country Residences

2.12 To facilitate efficient land use and reduce servicing costs, the I.D. shall encourage country residential subdivisions to locate in multi-lot country residential subdivisions.

2.13 Country residential subdivisions of two or more parcels in one quarter section shall require redesignation to country residential in the I.D. 18 Land Use Order.

2.14 In addition to the provisions of the Planning Act and Subdivision Regulations, multi-lot country residential subdivision may only be permitted on rural lands which:

(a) are lower capability agricultural land;
(b) have access to good, graded and gravelled or paved I.D. roads;
(c) have access to adequate recreation facilities;
(d) have existing or planned capacity for public services such as roads, school bus routes, telephone, gas, electricity, schools, health services and fire and police protection;
(e) have demonstrated adequate supply of potable water; and
(f) have demonstrated soil, drainage and watertable conditions suitable for on-site sewage disposal.

2.15 Multi-lot country residential subdivisions may be permitted within 1.6 km (one mile) of recreational lakes as identified by the I.D. However, if the I.D. is of the opinion that proposed or anticipated future subdivision may have a significant detrimental impact on a recreational lake, they may not approve redesignation of the proposal to country residential in the I.D. 18 Land Use Order until such time as a lake management plan is completed.

2.16 Multi-lot country residential subdivision applications for six or more lots must be accompanied by an Outline Plan which describes: sequence of development, land uses proposed, number of lots, transportation system (both vehicular and pedestrian), nature of adjacent land uses, location and extent of proposed reserve lots, topographic and drainage conditions, proposed water supply system and preliminary groundwater tests, proposed sewage disposal system and soil percolation test, and any other information the I.D. may require.

2.17 Developers of multi-lot country residential subdivisions shall enter into a development agreement with the I.D. prior to the registration of the subdivision.

2.18 Multi-lot country residential subdivisions should not be located in environmentally sensitive areas, critical wildlife habitat, or lake, river, or stream shorelands. Appropriate setbacks for subdivision development from each of the above areas should be applied.

2.19 Multi-lot country residential subdivision should be directed to areas which are extensively treed, have natural scenic landscape features, and have gently rolling topography.

2.20 Cash-in-lieu may be taken in place of municipal/school reserve in country residential subdivisions and utilize to acquire public access to recreational shorelands.

2.21 The I.D. should review and establish standards for internal roads in country residential subdivisions to fulfill transportation requirements and minimize maintenance costs. Internal road standards should be included as part of the development agreement between the I.D. and the developer.

3. URBAN VICINITY

The area surrounding urban settlements is often under pressure for a variety of competing land uses, including urban development, agriculture, country residential, industrial and recreational. The I.D. must regulate these land uses in a manner which minimizes land use conflicts.

Directions and Goals

The I.D. shall identify lands on the periphery of the Town of Lac La Biche and the Village of Plamondon which, due to their proximity to these urban centres, require special considerations to ensure that development is compatible with other land uses, and future growth of the adjacent urban municipality. More specifically, the goals of the I.D. are:

1. TO ENSURE ADEQUATE SPACE FOR URBAN EXPANSION.
2. TO ENCOURAGE EFFICIENT AND ORDERLY URBAN GROWTH.
3. TO AVOID NOXIOUS AND HAZARDOUS INDUSTRIES AND INTENSIVE LIVESTOCK CONFINEMENT FACILITIES NEAR URBAN CENTRES.

Development Policies

3.1 Urban expansion districts shall be established in the I.D. 18 Land Use Order around urban centres.

3.2 Within the urban expansion district, the I.D. may permit such uses as agriculture, recreation, transportation and utility facilities, rural industries and country residences as provided for in the I.D. 18 Land Use Order. However, the I.D. shall only permit uses where satisfied that there will be no detrimental effects on adjacent land uses, future urban development, and conforms to any plans in effect.

3.3 The I.D. shall consult adjacent urban municipalities on development proposals within 1 mile of their municipal boundaries to minimize potential land use conflicts and encourage an orderly pattern of development.

3.4 The I.D. shall encourage urban municipalities to expand in areas which avoid higher capability agricultural lands, regionally significant natural resources, recreational shorelands, and environmentally sensitive areas.

3.5 To achieve compact and efficient urban expansion, the I.D. shall only support annexations where:
(a) the lands are in Urban Expansion Areas;
(b) the land is suited for or can be economically adpated to urban uses and servicing; and
(c) the staging is compatible with that in the appropriate Urban General Municipal Plans.

4. HAMLETS

Numerous unincorporated settlements of various sizes exist within I.D. 18 South, offering a variety of services. While some have water and sewer systems, most do not. Possible demands on the I.D. for municipal services can have serious financial implications on the I.D., and must be carefully scrutinized. The I.D. is also concerned about possible surface and groundwater contamination, and land use conflicts with recreation shorelands and urban expansion areas.

Directions and Goals

The Improvement District shall encourage the orderly development of hamlets as a residential lifestyle alternative to urban centres and country residential subdivisions. More specifically, the goals of the I.D. are:

1. TO MAINTAIN HAMLETS AS A LIFESTYLE ALTERNATIVE.
2. TO ENCOURAGE GROWTH IN EXISTING HAMLETS IF SUCH GROWTH CAN BE SUSTAINED WITHOUT GROUNDWATER CONTAMINATION.
3. TO ENCOURAGE STRONGER CONTROLS OVER INSTALLATION, DESIGN AND OPERATION OF PRIVATE SEWAGE SYSTEMS.

Development Policies

4.1 The role of hamlets in the hierarchy of settlement types should be primarily one of providing residential opportunities with local commercial development.

4.2 Although many hamlets in the I.D. have some growth potential, those in which growth is more desirable and viable should be designated as hamlets in the I.D. 18 Land Use Order. Additional substantial residential development should be directed to such designated hamlets.

4.3 Prior to the designation of a hamlet in the I.D. 18 Land Use Order, the I.D. shall be satisfied that the site is suitable for future growth, and there is one or more of the following:
- (a) additional communal water and sewer system capacity;
- (b) existing or projected population sufficient to justify the costs of installation of communal water and/or sewer systems;
- (c) capacity for growth without contamination of surface and groundwater quality or supply.

4.4 Hamlet expansion which may jeopardize groundwater quality or quantities should not be permitted.

4.5 Subdivision and development in hamlets which lack communal water and sewage systems should be planned to permit future redesigning to a higher density should communal systems eventually be required.

4.6 The I.D. should support investigations into alternate systems for water distribution and sewage disposal in hamlets.

4.7 The I.D. may prepare area structure plans in hamlets where deemed necessary in order to provide for the orderly growth and development of the hamlet. After adoption, the area structure plans shall be incorporated into the I.D. 18 Land Use Order.

5. RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE

I.D. 18 South has a number of lakes with high recreational potential, due to some of the highest capabilities for water based recreation in the province. However, some of these prime recreation areas are also suitable for other land uses such as country residential development, agriculture and wildlife habitat. Where practical, these competing land uses shall be accommodated in a manner which maximizes benefits to all, while minimizing municipal servicing costs.

Directions and Goals

The recreational capabilities of I.D. 18 South are among the best in the province, and shall be managed in a fashion which utilizes the recreational attributes of the resource, without damaging them. Pursuant to this, the goals of the I.D. are:

1. TO MAINTAIN THE EXISTING RECREATIONAL QUALITIES OF LAKE.
2. TO ENCOURAGE THE DEVELOPMENT OF ADDITIONAL PUBLIC RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES AND FACILITIES.
3. TO MAINTAIN PUBLIC ACCESS TO SHORELINES.

Development Policies

5.1 Recreation areas may be identified by the I.D. to accommodate intensive recreation use areas and facilities.

5.2 The I.D. shall undertake a program to identify the lakes in the Improvement District which have higher recreational potential. The I.D. shall undertake lake management programs on these lakes when considered necessary, based on anticipated or existing development proposals in an area.

5.3 Lake management programs undertaken by the I.D. shall be prepared in accordance with Alberta Planning Board guidelines, and may be adopted as Lake Area Structure Plans by the I.D.

5.4 Each lake management program shall be undertaken with the intent of utilizing the resource potential of the lake, without exceeding the physical or social carrying capacity of the lake. Priorities shall be established for each lake on this basis.

5.5 River shoreland areas should form the basis for a continuous natural open space and recreation system for outdoor recreation activities. River shoreland areas are those lands adjacent to a river, extending back from the water 35 metres (115 feet) beyond the valley break. Where a valley break is not evident, setbacks shall be determined by the development officer, based on potential flood hazards and shoreline erosion.

5.6 Land uses within river shoreland areas should be limited to agricultural pursuits, farmsteads, recreation, fish and wildlife protection, sensitive or natural environment protection, sand and gravel extraction (subject to reclamation), and other uses which will not reduce or eliminate natural water retention areas on river valleys.

5.7 Structures which could be damaged by flooding, or land uses that could significantly impede flood waters, should locate outside the 1 in 100 year floodplain.

5.8 Intensive recreational uses may be permitted in appropriate locations in the I.D. as provided for in the I.D. 18 Land Use Order. Development permit applications for intensive recreational developments should include the following:
(a) evidence of need for a rural location;
(b) evidence of the need for the specific site proposed;
(c) groundwater and soil percolation tests;
(d) soil suitability evaluation;
(e) site plan detailing use of the site and location and design of the facilities;
(f) proposed water and sewage systems;
(g) means of access;
(h) requirement for municipal services;
(i) impact on adjacent land uses; and
(j) impact on fish and wildlife.

5.9 The I.D. and local authorities should encourage the development of Crown-owned shorelands with C.L.I. Class 1 and 2 and 3B recreation capability for intensive recreation use.

5.10 Developers of intensive recreation uses shall enter into a development agreement with the I.D. prior to a development permit being issued.

5.11 Rural condominium developments shall not be permitted until it has been determined to the satisfaction of the I.D. that potential impacts, costs, and benefits of such a development are acceptable.

5.12 The development of additional public recreation opportunities and facilities should be supported.

5.13 At the time of subdivision the I.D. shall request one of the following where reserves are owing:
(a) land be taken for reserves; or
(b) money in lieu be taken and invested in other lands or recreation facilities if reserves are not required in the local areas; or
(c) reserves be deferred where it is in the greater public interest to do so.

6. TRANSPORTATION AND UTILITY FACILITIES

Transportation and utility facilities are important land use components in the Improvement District. The lack of facilities in some areas has had a negative effect on the development of resources in the I.D., including oil and gas, forestry, recreation and tourism. On the other hand, transportation and utility lines can have undesirable effects on agriculture, recreation, wildlife habitat and country residences.

Directions and Goals

The I.D. shall encourage the combining of transportation, energy transmission and utility functions into multi-use corridors to minimize the environmental impact and disruption of other land uses. This includes linear facilities such as power lines, roads, and rail lines, as well as site-specific facilities such as airports, municipal water reservoirs, sewage lagoons, and solid waste disposal landfills. More specific goals of the I.D. are:

1. TO ENCOURAGE THE DEVELOPMENT OF A NEW HIGHWAY FROM LAC LA BICHE TO FORT MCMURRAY VIA CONKLIN.
2. TO PROTECT AIRPORTS FROM ENCROACHING LAND USES SO THEY MAY OPERATE IN A SAFE MANNER.
3. TO REDUCE TRANSPORTATION CONFLICTS BETWEEN RESOURCE VEHICLES AND OTHER HIGHWAY USERS.
4. TO MINIMIZE THE LOSS OF LAND AND IMPACT ON EXISTING LAND USES BY TRANSPORTATION, ENERGY TRANSMISSION AND UTILITY FACILITY DEVELOPMENT.

Development Policies

6.1 To improve the handling and disposal of solid waste, the I.D. should support either the phasing out of existing modified landfill sites and their conversion to sanitary landfill sites, or pickup locations for waste to be transported to a regional sanitary landfill site.

6.2 Siting of public facilities such as municipal sewage lagoons, water reservoirs, sanitary landfills and airports should, where possible, be located on lower capability agricultural land.

6.3 To conserve land, reduce fragmentation and minimize land use conflicts, the I.D. should request that:
- (a) new infrastructure lines should utilize existing rights-of-way or be combined in a common right-of-way where feasible;
- (b) new rights-of-way follow quarter section lines or major physical landscape features;
- (c) when new lines are located near urban areas, the route and facility be designed in such a was as to be compatible with future urban growth;
- (d) new infrastructure routes cross River shoreland areas at right angles or parallel the rivers with appropriate setbacks from the valley break to protect river shoreland features; and
- (e) when proposed new lines are likely to adversely affect residential areas, sufficient easement width be provided for buffer purposes.

6.4 The I.D. should support and encourage Alberta Transportation proposals for a highway extension northeast of Lac La Biche which could provide improved access for resource exploration, isolated settlements, recreation, timber cutting and eventually, an alternate route to Fort McMurray.

6.5 Where alternative routes are available, heavy vehicles and high traffic volumes related to resource extraction operations should avoid routes utilized by farm vehicles, school buses and recreational vehicles.

6.6 Airport Vicinity Protection Area (AVPA) Regulations should be established around licensed airports in the I.D. to control uses and developments which could result in use conflicts and adversely affect the safe operation of the airport facility. Until AVPA regulations are established, development around airports shall be in accordance with the I.D. 18 Land Use Order.

7. HIGHWAY COMMERCIAL

Highway commercial development has not resulted in significant problems in the I.D., as most are located in urban centres or in hamlets. However, the I.D. is concerned that the establishment of highway commercial nodes could result in conflict with adjacent land uses, and may result in the eventual growth into a rural settlement, with related servicing costs.

Directions and Goals

The I.D. shall accommodate development which serves the traveling public. The location and accessibility should not adversely affect the standard of safety or convenience of the highway, or existing service facilities in towns or hamlets. More specifically, the goals of the I.D. are:

1. TO PROVIDE FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF HIGHWAY COMMERCIAL FACILITIES.
2. TO AVOID LOCATIONS ON THE URBAN FRINGE.
3. TO SERVE THE NEEDS OF THE HIGHWAY TRAVELING PUBLIC.

Development Policies

7.1 Contingent upon demonstrated demand and availability of suitable sites, the I.D. may redesignate land for highway commercial use in the I.D. 18 Land Use Order to provide those services essential to the highway traveler. Other retail or service activities shall not be permitted in these areas.

7.2 A specific identification of highway commercial services essential to the traveling public shall be as identified in the I.D. 18 Land Use Order.

7.3 In addition to the conditions in the Planning Act and Subdivision Regulation, proposed locations for new Highway Commercial uses should meet the following criteria:
- (a) be at least 8 km (5 miles) measured along the highway from the boundary of the nearest urban municipality;
- (b) be at least 8 km (5 miles) along the highway from the nearest rural highway commercial areas; and
- (c) be located so that the functional integrity of the highway is maintained.

7.4 Prior to approval for the subdivision or development of a highway commercial use, an Outline Plan shall be prepared which:
- (a) precisely defines the boundaries;
- (b) designates suitable building sites;
- (c) ensures the functional integrity of the adjacent highway is maintained through the use of service roads and limited access points where necessary;
- (d) defines standards of development which may include architectural, landscaping and sign control;
- (e) identifies methods and facilities for servicing; and
- (f) includes groundwater and soil permeability evaluations.

7.5 To prevent highway commercial developments from becoming rural settlements, on-site residential development and staff accommodation shall be strictly regulated.

8. RURAL INDUSTRIAL

Industry is viewed favourably in the Improvement District, but when unsuitable locations are developed, problems can result. The I.D. has identified a need for suitable rural industrial locations, which minimize municipal servicing costs and impacts on adjacent land uses. The I.D. is also concerned about air, soil and water pollution which may result from industries.

Directions and Goals

The I.D. shall accommodate industries which are better suited to a rural rather than an urban environment because of a requirement for relatively large tracts of land, minimal levels of municipal services, and those with a potential for safety hazards, excessive noise, dust and odour. The I.D. may permit commercial uses ancillary to rural industrial uses. In addition, commercial uses utilized primarily by the occupants of a rural industrial area may also be considered within a rural industrial area if no other nearby commercial location exists. More specifically, the goals of the I.D. are:

1. TO PROVIDE FOR RURAL INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES.
2. TO MINIMIZE MUNICIPAL SERVICING COSTS.
3. TO AVOID USING HIGHER CAPABILITY AGRICULTURAL LAND.
4. TO MINIMIZE CONFLICTS WITH ADJACENT LAND USES.

Development Policies

8.1 The I.D. shall encourage the establishment of industries in the I.D., which, by way of their extensive spatial requirements, minimal servicing needs or special characteristics (hazards, excessive noise, odour, dust), are more appropriately located in a rural location. Specific uses permitted shall be as outlined in the I.D. 18 Land Use Order.

8.2 The I.D. shall encourage the clustering of rural industries into rural industrial parks, to minimize municipal servicing costs and make efficient use of land.

8.3 Rural industrial subdivisions of three or more industrial parcels in one quarter section shall require redesignation to Rural Industrial in the I.D. 18 Land Use Order.

8.4 Locations for rural industries should conform with the following criteria:
(a) have stable, well drained soils;
(b) have a low watertable and relatively flat topography;
(c) have highway and preferably rail access;
(d) have required utilities available;
(e) be compatible with adjacent land uses;
(f) have suitable local climatic conditions, especially for noxious industries; and
(g) be within commuting distance of an urban municipality.

8.5 Subdivision or development of land for rural industrial purposes shall be encouraged to locate on lower capability agricultural land. Industrial proposals on higher capability agricultural land should only be permitted if there are unique site requirements which cannot be met on lower capability soils.

8.6 Rural industrial uses shall not locate on river or lake shorelands, or in areas of critical wildlife habitat. Industrial uses which by their nature are hazardous, cause excessive odour or dust may be directed away from urban expansion areas.

8.7 Major rural industrial proposals of a quarter section or larger, or those within .8 km (5 miles) of a highway may be subject to the submission of an Area Structure Plan or outline plan.

8.8 Applications for redesignation of land for rural industrial uses, or development permits for rural industries shall:

(a) identify developable portions of the area and their specific boundaries;
(b) identify the size and number of parcels proposed;
(c) identify servicing requirements and provisions for meeting them;
(d) identify sources of sand and gravel which may require removal prior to, or concurrently with, development;
(e) identify the provisions for access;
(f) identify the internal and service road network;
(g) include any other matters considered necessary by the I.D.

8.9 Appropriate buffers shall be maintained between rural industrial Areas and other existing and future land uses (especially areas which may be required for urban residential development). Visual screening should be provided if the rural industrial area is located adjacent to a primary or secondary highway.

8.10 The proponent of a rural industrial development shall enter into a development agreement with the I.D.

9. RESOURCE EXTRACTION

Oil and gas exploration and development, and to a lesser extent gravel extraction and forestry have been the most significant resource extraction activities in Improvement District 18 South. However, all resource extraction in the I.D. has been restricted somewhat by the limited transportation system in the area, and a lack of co-ordination of energy and utility corridors. The I.D. is also concerned about the impacts of resource extraction activities on recreation lakes, wildlife habitat, trapping and country residential development, and the possibilities of resultant air, water and soil pollution.

Directions and Goals

The Improvement District shall endeavor to minimize any conflicts which may occur between resource extraction operations and adjacent land uses and future land uses. More specifically, the goals of the I.D. are:

1. TO AVOID PERMANENT RESIDENTIAL, COMMERCIAL OR RELATED INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT ADJACENT TO PLANT SITE.
2. TO MINIMIZE POTENTIAL CONFLICTS WITH ADJACENT LAND USES.

Development Policies

9.1 Resource extraction uses include the extraction and/or processing of oil, gas, sand, gravel, coal, limestone, gypsum, granite, rock salt, peat and timber.

9.2 Resource extraction uses where possible should avoid locating on higher capability agricultural land, shoreland areas, urban expansion areas, and country residential areas. Appropriate buffers should be maintained between the resource operation and the above mentioned land uses to provide protection from hazards, noise, dust and odours.

9.3 The proponent of any new resource extraction development (excluding highways, oil and gas wells or batteries, pipeline), shall clearly identify any municipal costs associated with providing new services and upgrading existing services made necessary by that development. A development agreement with the I.D. shall be negotiated prior to issuance of a development permit.

9.4 Where a resource extraction operation will disturb the land surface, the proponent of the development shall submit to the I.D. at time of application for development permit, a reclamation plan which has received all necessary provincial approvals, and:

(a) ensures that in the case of higher capability agricultural land, the land can be returned to at least the same level of agricultural productivity using similar inputs as before the development occurred;

(b) ensures that in the case of lower capability agricultural land, the land can be reclaimed so that it will sustain plant growth without the application of irrigation or fertilizer after the vegetation becomes established;

(c) ensures that in the case of river and lake shoreland areas, the land can be reclaimed to at least its former recreation potential; and

(d) ensures that in the case of potential negative impact on surface or subsurface water, or on fish or wildlife habitats, mitigative measures will be undertaken.

9.5 The I.D. should request that lakes identified as recreational lakes be used for water withdrawal or effluent discharge only if the lake water quality and level will not be adversely affected and if the lake recreational potential will not be reduced, either initially or subsequently.

10. ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE AREAS.

Improvement District 18 is strongly opposed to any activities which have detrimental effects on the environment, and is concerned about the impacts on environmentally sensitive areas from country residential development, recreational developments, resource extraction activities, agriculture and energy and rail corridors.

Directions and Goals

The Improvement District shall strive to avoid subdivision and development in fragile natural environments which can be negatively impacted by most land uses. These lands can include lake and river shorelands, unstable soils, wetlands (deltas) and lands within the 1 in 100 year floodplain. Specifically, the I.D. has identified the following goal:

1. TO RESTRICT SUBDIVISION AND DEVELOPMENT ON FRAGILE NATURAL ENVIRONMENTS.

Development Policies

10.1 Subdivision and development on environmentally sensitive lands should be limited to low intensity uses unless:
   (a) detailed environmental impact analysis conclude that the natural character and function of the feature to be protected will not be adversely affected;
   (b) comprehensive cost/benefit analysis considering economic, social, and environmental factors, reveals that a substantial net benefit will result from the modification.

10.2 Transportation, utility and energy transmission facilities may be permitted if necessary, but only after adequate environmental impact analysis has been undertaken, and satisfactory ameliorative measures have been provided for.